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9	Facsimile: 202-514-8742 Attorneys for Plaintiff						
	•	AGENTAL COLUMN					
10	UNITED STATES D	ISTRICT COURT					
11	NORTHERN DISTRIC	T OF CALIFORNIA					
12							
13	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,						
14	Plaintiff,						
15	v.	Case No					
16	ONORATO & CO., INC., a corporation,	COMPLAINT FOR PERMANENT					
17	DAVID L. PIROTTO and JOSEPH V.H. D'AMATO, individuals,	INJUNCTION					
18	Defendants.						
19							
20	Digintiff the United States of America by its	undersianed souncel and an habelf of the United					
		undersigned counsel, and on behalf of the United					
21	States Food and Drug Administration ("FDA"), respec	etfully represents to this Court as follows:					
22	1. This action is brought by the United St	ates of America under the Federal Food, Drug, and					
23	Cosmetic Act (the "Act"), 21 U.S.C. § 332(a), to enjoin and restrain Onorato & Company, Inc.						
24	'Onorato"), a corporation, David L. Pirotto and Joseph V.H. D'Amato, individuals (collectively,						
25	Defendants"), from violating 21 U.S.C. § 331(k), by causing food to become adulterated within the						
26	meaning of 21 U.S.C. § 342(a)(4) while such food is l	ing of 21 U.S.C. § 342(a)(4) while such food is held for sale after shipment of one or more of its					
27	components in interstate commerce.	aponents in interstate commerce.					
28	//						
	COMPLAINT FOR PERMANENT INJUNCTION 1						

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

- 2. This Court has jurisdiction over the subject matter and all parties to this action under 21 U.S.C. § 332(a), and 28 U.S.C. §§ 1331, 1337, and 1345.
 - 3. Venue in this district is proper under 28 U.S.C. §§ 1391(b) and (c).

INTRADISTRICT ASSIGNMENT

4. The conduct at issue in this action took place in substantial part in San Mateo County.

DEFENDANTS

- 5. Onorato is a California corporation located at 390 Swift Avenue, Ste. 17, South San Francisco, CA 94080, within the jurisdiction of this Court.
- 6. Defendant David L. Pirotto is the Owner and President of Onorato. He is the most responsible person at the company. Defendant Pirotto's duties include managing Onorato's daily operations, including ordering, receiving, processing, packing, marketing, and distribution. He is responsible for hiring and firing employees, financial decisions, and initiating and implementing corrective actions. He performs his duties at 390 Swift Avenue, Ste. 17, South San Francisco, CA 94080, within the jurisdiction of this Court.
- 7. Defendant Joseph V.H. D'Amato is the General Manager of Onorato. Along with Defendant Pirotto, Defendant D'Amato is responsible for ordering and receiving food, maintaining all Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point ("HACCP") records, and distributing finished products to customers. Although Defendant Pirotto has the power to initiate and implement corrective actions for seafood HACCP violations, Defendant D'Amato shares responsibility for the company's operations and seafood HACCP plans. At the close of each inspection of Defendants' facility since May 2012, the FDA investigators discussed their inspectional observations with Defendants Pirotto and D'Amato. Defendant D'Amato performs his duties at 390 Swift Avenue, Ste. 17, South San Francisco, CA 94080, within the jurisdiction of this Court.
- 8. Onorato receives, processes, packs, holds, and distributes a variety of fish and fishery products, including ready-to-eat raw tuna, unpasteurized and pasteurized crabmeat, and pre-packaged smoked and non-smoked histamine-forming species of fish. Its products are received, processed, packed, held, and distributed at and from the company's facility located at 390 Swift Avenue, Ste. 17,

South San Francisco, California 94080, within the jurisdiction of this Court.

9. Defendants receive fish and fishery products from California distributors who import the products from foreign suppliers, and distribute their finished products to customers within California.

FOOD SAFETY

- 10. Clostridium botulinum ("C. bot.") is an anaerobic bacterium, meaning that it thrives in oxygen-free environments. All people are susceptible to C. bot.'s neurotoxin that C. bot. spores can produce in food. Ingesting even a small amount of this neurotoxin can cause botulism. Although the incidence of botulism is rare, the disease can cause paralysis and has a high mortality rate if it is not treated promptly.
- 11. *C. bot.* is a pathogen that is widely distributed in nature and may be found in any raw fish or fishery product. Because its spores are heat-resistant, *C. bot.* can survive cooking. *C. bot.* can also survive in food that has been incorrectly or minimally processed. Certain strains of *C. bot.*, called proteolytic strains, produce offensive odors and tastes in food products, and can grow at temperatures as low as 50°F. In contrast, non-proteolytic strains of *C. bot.* do not produce the same sensory signals. These non-proteolytic strains are particularly dangerous because they can grow and produce toxin at refrigeration temperatures (as low as 38°F), rendering a food toxic without any signs of spoilage. Toxin formation by non-proteolytic *C. bot.* can occur at temperatures above 38°F. In foods that rely on refrigeration to inhibit the growth of *C. bot.*, seafood processors must employ appropriately rapid cooling processes after cooking to prevent pathogen growth and toxin formation.
- 12. Listeria monocytogenes ("L. mono") is the bacterium that causes listeriosis, a disease commonly contracted by eating food contaminated with *L. mono*. Listeriosis can be serious, even fatal, for vulnerable groups such as newborns and those with impaired immune systems. The most serious forms of listeriosis can result in meningitis and septicemia. Pregnant women may contract flu-like symptoms from listeriosis, and complications from the disease can result in miscarriage or septicemia in the newborn.
- 13. Unlike many other foodborne microbes, *L. mono* can adapt and grow at refrigeration temperatures or under other adverse conditions, such as high-salt or high-acid (low pH) conditions. The presence of *L. mono* in a facility processing ready-to-eat foods presents a particularly significant public

1 health risk.

- 14. To minimize the potential for *L. mono* contamination, it is necessary to have sanitation procedures that prevent contamination of food contact surfaces and to eliminate niches where *L. mono* can become established, grow, and persist. Strict in-plant sanitation measures must be taken to eliminate *L. mono* and prevent its proliferation.
- 15. The Act and its implementing regulations require a seafood processor to control the risk of *C. bot.* and *L. mono* formation if the bacteria are reasonably likely to grow in the processor's seafood products. *See* 21 U.S.C. § 342(a)(4); 21 C.F.R. §§ 123.6(a)-(c).
- 16. Processing histamine-forming species (e.g., tuna, mahi-mahi, escolar, yellowtail, and wahoo) without developing and implementing an adequate HACCP program can lead to histamine formation in fish. Some species of fish are susceptible to the formation of histamine when time and temperature conditions allow for the growth of spoilage bacteria. Accumulation of histamine and some other spoilage by-products in the flesh of the fish is collectively known as scombrotoxin. Fish and fishery product processors can minimize the growth of spoilage organisms and the formation of scombrotoxin by preventing exposure to potentially unsafe times and temperatures by, among other things, limiting the amount of time scombrotoxin-forming fish are exposed to temperatures above 40°F during receiving, storing, and processing.
- 17. Consuming fish containing scombrotoxin can result in an illness known as scombrotoxin poisoning, histamine poisoning, or scombroid poisoning. This illness can cause rash, hives, nausea, dizziness, vomiting, and diarrhea of varying degrees of severity and may require hospitalization, particularly in the case of elderly, very young, or immune-impaired persons. In severe cases, an asthmatic-like constriction of the air passage, heart palpitations, and respiratory stress have been reported.
- 18. Several foods contain allergenic proteins that are naturally part of the food. These allergens pose a health risk to certain sensitive individuals who are allergic to these proteins. The symptoms of food allergies can include tingling of the mouth, swelling of the tongue and throat, difficulty breathing, hives, vomiting, abdominal cramps, diarrhea, drop in blood pressure, loss of consciousness, and in severe cases, death.

- 19. All foods that are not raw agricultural commodities and that contain a major food allergen must be labeled to clearly identify the name of the food source from which the allergen is derived. *See* 21 U.S.C. § 343(w)(1). "Major food allergen" means any of the following: milk, eggs, fish (e.g., bass, flounder, or cod), Crustacean shellfish (e.g., crab, lobster, or shrimp), tree nuts, wheat, peanuts, and soy beans. 21 U.S.C. § 321(qq)(1).
- 20. An adequate HACCP plan to control the hazard of undeclared allergens includes controls to ensure that the correct name is listed on the product labeling.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

- 21. Defendants' fish and fishery products are "food" within the meaning of the Act. *See* 21 U.S.C. § 321(f).
- 22. Food is adulterated within the meaning of 21 U.S.C. § 342(a)(4) "if it has been prepared, packed, or held under insanitary conditions whereby it may have become contaminated with filth, or whereby it may have been rendered injurious to health."
- 23. A seafood processor's failure to comply with the requirements of the seafood HACCP regulations, 21 C.F.R. Part 123, renders its fish or fishery products adulterated under the Act. *See* 21 U.S.C. § 342(a)(4); 21 C.F.R. §§ 123.6(g), 123.12(d).
- 24. The seafood HACCP regulations require every fish and fishery product processor to "conduct, or have conducted for it, a hazard analysis to determine whether there are food safety hazards that are reasonably likely to occur" during the processing of each kind of its fish or fishery products. 21 C.F.R. § 123.6(a). A food safety hazard is "any biological, chemical, or physical property that may cause a food to be unsafe for human consumption." 21 C.F.R. § 123.3(f).
- 25. Whenever a hazard analysis reveals one or more food safety hazards that are reasonably likely to occur during processing, the processor must develop and implement an adequate HACCP plan to control the identified food safety hazards. 21 C.F.R. § 123.6(b). Among other things, a HACCP plan must:
- A. Identify critical control points ("CCPs"), which are points, steps, or procedures in a food manufacturing process at which controls can be applied to prevent, eliminate, or reduce a food safety hazard to an acceptable level. *See* 21 C.F.R. §§ 123.3(b) and 123.6(c)(2); and

1	with filth or may have been rendered injurious to health. Such insanitary conditions include:					
2	A. Defendant's failure to implement effective sanitation controls in accordance with					
3	food cGMP requirements, 21 C.F.R. Part 110; and					
4	B. Defendants' failure to comply with the seafood HACCP regulations, 21 C.F.R.					
5	Part 123, by, among other deficiencies, failing to adequately control the risk of <i>C. bot.</i> and <i>L. mono</i>					
6	growth and toxin formation in susceptible fish and fishery products and failing to sufficiently monitor					
7	sanitation conditions and practices during processing.					
8	HISTORY OF VIOLATIONS					
9	31. The Food and Drug Administration ("FDA") inspected Onorato's facility nine times:					
10	December 2017, November 2016, September 2015, February 2013, May 2012, August 2011, November					
11	2008, May 2007, and June 2006. During each inspection, FDA investigators found the same or similar					
12	types of insanitary conditions, as well as repeated violations of the Act and the cGMP and seafood					
13	HACCP regulations.					
14	December 2017 Inspection					
15	32. During FDA's inspection of Defendants' facility between December 12 and 18, 2017 (the					
16	"December 2017 inspection"), FDA investigators documented significant cGMP and seafood HACCP					
17	deficiencies. At the close of the inspection, FDA investigators issued a List of Inspectional					
18	Observations ("Form FDA-483") to Defendant Pirotto that included, but was not limited to, the					
19	following observations:					
20	<u>cGMP Violations</u>					
21	A. Failure to clean and sanitize food-contact surfaces when the food-contact surfaces					
22	may have become contaminated, in violation of 21 C.F.R. § 110.35(d)(2);					
23	B. Failure to ensure that all persons working in direct contact with food, food-contact					
24	surfaces, and food-packaging materials conform to hygienic practices to protect against food					
25	contamination, in violation of 21 C.F.R. § 110.10(b)(1);					
26	Seafood HACCP Violations					
27	C. Failure to list in the HACCP plan the food safety hazards that are reasonably					
28	kely to occur, in violation of 21 C.F.R. § 123.6(c)(1);					
	COMPLAINT FOR					

PERMANENT INJUNCTION

surfaces, in violation of 21 C.F.R. § 123.11(b)(3);

- D. Failure to list in the HACCP plan food safety hazards that are reasonably likely to occur, in violation of 21 C.F.R. § 123.6(c)(1);
- E. Failure to include in the HACCP plan a corrective action plan to ensure affected product is not entered into commerce and the cause of the deviation is corrected, in violation of 21 C.F.R. § 123.7(b); and
- F. Failure to maintain sanitation control records that document actual conditions, in violation of 21 C.F.R. § 123.11(c).
- 35. During the November 2016 inspection, FDA investigators collected fifty environmental sub-samples from Defendants' fish-processing room. Three tested positive for *L. mono*, including a rubber floor mat and the surface of the fish weight scale, where *L. mono* was detected during the December 2017 inspection. In addition, five of the sub-samples tested positive for *Listeria innocua* ("*L. innocua*"), a non-pathogenic a bacterium whose presence in a food-processing facility is an indicator of insanitary conditions.
- 36. Between 2006 and 2015, FDA inspected Defendants' facility seven times. During each inspection, FDA investigators observed the same or similar significant violations of the Act and the cGMP and seafood HACCP regulations as those observed during prior inspections. At the close of each inspection, FDA investigators issued a Form FDA-483 to Defendant Pirotto and discussed with him and, since the May 2012 inspection, also with Defendant D'Amato, the serious cGMP and seafood HACCP violations observed.

History

- 37. Defendants have been repeatedly warned that their operations violate the law and that their failure to implement corrective actions could lead to regulatory action. At the close of each inspection between 2006 and 2017, FDA investigators presented Defendant Pirotto with a Form FDA-483 and discussed with him their observations of objectionable conditions and practices at Defendants' facility. At the close of the May 2012 inspection and for each inspection thereafter, these discussions included Defendant D'Amato.
 - 38. The individual Defendants attended telephonic regulatory meetings with FDA on June

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20, 2017, and August 1, 2012. During each meeting, FDA representatives discussed Defendants' previous violations and their repeated failures to correct these violations.

- 39. FDA issued the company and Defendant Pirotto a Warning Letter, dated October 25, 2011, notifying them that they were in violation of the cGMP and seafood HACCP regulations, causing their products to be adulterated under the Act. The Warning Letter cautioned Defendants that if they failed to promptly correct their violations, FDA may pursue further regulatory action, including an injunction.
- 40. Defendants have repeatedly promised to take corrective actions and comply with the Act's statutory and regulatory requirements. However, as evidenced by the repeated violations observed during FDA's December 2017 inspection, Defendants have failed to take effective measures to bring their seafood-processing operations into compliance with the law.

The United States believes that, unless restrained by order of this Court, Defendants will continue to violate 21 U.S.C. § 331(k).

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff respectfully requests that the Court:

- Order that Defendants, and each and all of their directors, officers, agents, I. representatives, employees, attorneys, successors, and assigns, and any and all persons in active concert or participation with any of them (including individuals, directors, corporations, subsidiaries, affiliates, and partnerships), cease receiving, preparing, processing, packing, holding, or distributing articles of food, at or from the Onorato facility or at any other current or future location, unless and until Defendants bring their receiving, preparing, processing, packing, holding, and food distribution into compliance with the Act and applicable regulations, to FDA's satisfaction;
- II. Permanently restrain and enjoin, under 21 U.S.C. § 332(a), Defendants, and each and all of their directors, officers, agents, representatives, employees, attorneys, successors, and assigns, and any and all persons in active concert or participation with any of them (including individuals, directors, corporations, subsidiaries, affiliates, and partnerships), from directly or indirectly violating 21 U.S.C. § 331(k), by causing articles of food that are held for sale after shipment of one or more components in interstate commerce to become adulterated within the meaning of 21 U.S.C. § 342(a)(4);
 - III. Order that FDA be authorized pursuant to this injunction to inspect Defendants' place(s)

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1	of business and all records relating to the rece	ess and all records relating to the receiving, preparing, processing, packing, holding, and						
2	distribution of food to ensure continuing comp	re continuing compliance with the terms of the injunction, the costs of such Defendants at the rates prevailing at the time the inspections are						
3	inspections to be borne by Defendants at the r	e borne by Defendants at the rates prevailing at the time the inspections are						
4	accomplished; and	omplished; and						
5	IV. Order that Plaintiff be awarded costs incurred in pursuing this action, including the costs							
6	of investigation to date, and such other equitable relief as the Court deems just and proper.							
7	DATED this 27th day of November, 2018.							
8		Respectfully submitted,						
9 10		JOSEPH H. HUNT Assistant Attorney General Civil Division						
11 12		ALEX G. TSE United States Attorney						
13		JAMES M. BURNHAM Deputy Assistant Attorney General						
14 15		GUSTAV W. EYLER Acting Director						
16		/s/ James T. Nelson						
17	OF COUNSEL:	JAMES T. NELSON Trial Attorney Consumer Protection Branch						
18 19	ROBERT P. CHARROW General Counsel	U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Division P.O. Box 386 Washington, DC 20044-0386						
20	LOWELL J. SCHILLER Acting Chief Counsel	Tel: (202) 616-2376 Fax: (202-514-8742						
21	Food and Drug Division	james.nelson2@usdoj.gov						
22	ANNAMARIE KEMPIC Deputy Chief Counsel, Litigation							
23	JOSHUA A. DAVENPORT							
24	Associate Chief Counsel United States Department of							
25	Health & Human Services Office of the General Counsel							
26	Food and Drug Division White Oak 31 Room 4586 10903 New Hampshire Ave.							
27 28	10903 New Hampshire Ave. Silver Spring, MD 20993-0002 Tel: (301) 796-6717 Fax: (301) 847-8638							
	Email: joshua.davenport@fda.hhs.gov							
	COMPLAINT FOR PERMANENT INJUNCTION	11						

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The JS-CAND 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved in its original form by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the Clerk of Court to initiate the civil docket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON NEXT PAGE OF THIS FORM.)

I. (a) PLAINTIFFS **United States of America**

(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff (EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)

(c) Attorneys (Firm Name, Address, and Telephone Number) James T. Nelson, U.S. Department of Justice, 450 Fifth Street, N.W. Room 6400-South Washington DC 20001 202-616-2376

DEFENDANTS

Onorato & Co., Inc., Pirotto, David L., and D'Amato, Joseph V.H.

County of Residence of First Listed Defendant (IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES ONLY)

IN LAND CONDEMNATION CASES, USE THE LOCATION OF THE TRACT OF LAND INVOLVED.

Attorneys (If Known)

Christopher Van Gundy, Keller and Heckman LLP, Three Embarcadero Center Suite 1420 San Francisco CA 94111 415-948-2831

N.W., Room 6400-So	uth, Washington, DC 2	0001, 202-616	5-2376	Center, Suite 1420, Sa	an Franc	cisco, CA 94111, 41	5-948-2831
II. BASIS OF JURIS	SDICTION (Place an "X" in	One Box Only)		IZENSHIP OF PRIN	CIPAI		'X" in One Box for Plaintiff ox for Defendant)
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IV. NATURE OF S	UIT (Place an "X" in One Box (Only)					
CONTRACT		RTS		FORFEITURE/PENALT	Y	BANKRUPTCY	OTHER STATUTES
110 Insurance 120 Marine 130 Miller Act	PERSONAL INJURY 310 Airplane 315 Airplane Product Liability	PERSONAL INJUI 365 Personal Injury – F		625 Drug Related Seizure 6 Property 21 USC § 88 690 Other		2 Appeal 28 USC § 158 3 Withdrawal 28 USC § 157	375 False Claims Act 376 Qui Tam (31 USC § 3729(a))
140 Negotiable Instrument	320 Assault, Libel & Slander	367 Health Care/		LABOR	1	PROPERTY RIGHTS	
150 Recovery of Overpayment Of Veteran's Benefits 151 Medicare Act 152 Recovery of Defaulted Student Loans (Excludes Veterans) 153 Recovery of Overpayment of Veteran's Benefits 160 Stockholders' Suits 190 Other Contract 195 Contract Product Liability 196 Franchise REAL PROPERTY 210 Land Condemnation 220 Foreclosure 230 Rent Lease & Ejectment 240 Torts to Land 245 Tort Product Liability 290 All Other Real Property	313 Timplane Troduct Elability		ct Liability sonal Injury sonal Injury ility OPERTY ling al Property mage Product CITIONS ORPUS ce acate V R COther tion e— f	Personal iability al Injury (700 Labor/Management Relations) (700 Labor/Management Relations) (700 Labor/Management Relations) (700 Railway Labor Act Relations) (700 Railway La		0 Copyrights 0 Patent 5 Patent—Abbreviated New Drug Application 0 Trademark SOCIAL SECURITY 1 HIA (1395ff) 2 Black Lung (923) 3 DIWC/DIWW (405(g)) 4 SSID Title XVI 5 RSI (405(g)) EDERAL TAX SUITS 0 Taxes (U.S. Plaintiff or Defendant) 1 IRS—Third Party 26 USC § 7609	` `
ACTION 21	Removed from 3		Reope	te jurisdictional statutes unle	strict (spec	v):	
VII. REQUESTED I COMPLAINT:	N CHECK IF THIS IS A UNDER RULE 23, Fed		DEMA	AND \$		CHECK YES only if den IURY DEMAND:	nanded in complaint: Yes X No
VIII. RELATED CAS	SE(S), JUDGE			DOCKET NUMB	BER		

(Place an "X" in One Box Only)

IF ANY (See instructions):

× SAN FRANCISCO/OAKLAND

DIVISIONAL ASSIGNMENT (Civil Local Rule 3-2)

EUREKA-MCKINLEYVILLE

SAN JOSE